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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE — Radio Service — OFFICE OF INFORMATION

Housekeepers' Chat Tuesday, November 13, 1928.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Subject: "Care of Food in the Home." Information, including recipe for Chutney Vinegar, from Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. D. A.

Bulletin available: "Care of Food in the Home."

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I might as well tell you now, there is nothing of a frivolous nature in today's "Chat." Solid information -- that's our menu for this Tuesday morning. But before I begin my practical speech, on "The Care of Food in the Home," and before I describe the recipe, I must tell you what I saw in the kitchenware section of my favorite department store.

I wanted some good-looking containers for my staple foods: rice, cocoa, cornstarch, and so forth; something which would keep out insects, and be easy to clean and handle.

The first containers the clerk showed me were made of tin, painted to harmonize with almost any kitchen color scheme. These tin containers are inexpensive, light, unbreakable, and attractive. However, they have two disadvantages: they may rust, and they are made with seams, which makes them a little hard to clean.

The next ones I saw were made of earthenware and crockery. Good looking, too -- in many colors, and attractive designs. They are easily cleaned, but like tin, you can't tell what's in them, unless they're labelled.

I finally bought glass containers, so I can see what's inside and order more cocoa, or cornstarch, before my supply is exhausted. Labels are not generally necessary on glass containers; however, if you want labels, for foods which look alike, black letters, or paper labels under shellac, are satisfactory.

Now we're all set for the speech: "Care of Food in the Home." It even has an opening paragraph, like this:

Even the best foods may be spoiled by careless handling in the home. There's no use for us to spend several hours, selecting the best foods available on the market, unless we take care of these foods after we get them home.

How's that for an opening paragraph? Here's the real "meat" of the speech:

The refrigerator is the best place to store perishable foods, such as milk, butter, meats, fresh vegetables, and fruits. Many of us use a refrigerator all summer, and then quit ordering ice, as soon as cool weather sets in. This may be economy, and again it may not. It costs money to

provide ice, electricity, or gas, for nine or twelve months' service, but in many cases it is money wisely spent. Especially is this true where there are children. Milk is essential in the diet of children. But it is not enough to merely provide milk. It should be milk that has been kept at a temperature below 50 degrees Fahrenheit, preferably between 50 and 45 degrees. You probably know, that above 50 degrees, the bacteria in milk multiply very rapidly, causing the milk to sour, and making it unpalatable. A higher temperature also is favorable to the growth of other micro-organisms, which may be present in the milk.

In using the refrigerator, locate the coldest section, and place the milk, and other dairy products, in this space. In an ice-cooled refrigerator, the space directly under the ice chamber is generally the coolest part. Reserve the next coldest space for meat and eggs. Keep other foods, as vegetables and fruits on the remaining shelves.

A cellar, provided it is cold, dry, and well-ventilated, is a fairly good place for storing foods. Many cellars, however, are far from dry, of uncertain temperature in summer, and if they contain a furnace, they may be too warm for food storage, even in winter. Frequently, no provision is made for proper ventilation, in the cellar.

During the winter months, a "cold box" is often used for food storage. The cold box is most effective if placed on a shaded side of the house. In using it for food, one must be careful, for the food is likely to freeze, when the temperature drops suddenly. Such a box should be well screened.

When you store foods in the refrigerator, the cellar, or the cold box, be sure to cover left-over creamed dishes, milk puddings, meats, and so forth, before you put them away. If such foods are covered, they will not dry out, and they will be much more attractive and palatable when served again.

Meats, poultry, and fish should be kept clean, cold and dry. Cuts of meats from the market should be unwrapped as soon as delivered. Any dirt should be wiped or scraped off, and the meat then placed in a clean, dry, covered dish, in the refrigerator or cold storage room. Meat should never be washed before storing. Washing draws the juices from meats, and makes them spoil more quickly. Edible organs, such as liver, sweetbreads, and brains, spoil more easily than the ordinary cuts of meat, and should be used promptly.

Bread, cake, pies, cookies, and so forth, after they are taken from the oven, should be cooled rapidly, and then stored in well-scalded tin box, or other suitable covered receptacle. Do not wrap hot bread in a cloth. Wrapping hot bread in a cloth tends to injure the flavor, and spoils the crisp crust. Bread is an ideal place for the growth of molds; therefore, the bread box should be scalded and aired, at least once a week, and should not be shut up airtight, especially in hot, humid weather, when it is filled with fresh bread.

Flour, sugar, cereals, and other dry groceries should be kept dry, and protected from household pests. Tea, coffee, and spices hold their flavor best in air-tight containers.

Canned goods -- jellies, jams, and so on -- should be kept in a clean, dry, cool, closet or storeroom. It is well to have canned goods on narrow shelves, so that the supply can be looked over easily, and any spoiled food quickly detected. If canned goods must be stored in the kitchen cupboard, they should be placed on the lower shelves, where they will be least exposed to heat and steam. Canned foods in glass jars should be shielded from the light, to prevent fading.

The only question I shall answer today is a request for Chutney Vinegar. It's a rather "fussy" recipe but very good for use in salad dressings. You who pride yourselves on unusual flavors, in your salads, will like this vinegar. One dozen ingredients, for Chutney Vinegar:

1 cup raisins
Peel from 1 lemon, cut in thin strips
Peel from 1 orange, cut in thin strips
1 tablespoon cardamon seeds, whole or ground
1 tablespoon curry powder
2 small onions, sliced
1/2 dozen cloves
1 hot red pepper, minced
1/4 cup sugar
1 teaspoon ginger
1 teaspoon garlic, finely cut, and
1 quart vinegar

Twelve ingredients, again: (Repeat)

Heat the vinegar scalding hot, add all the other ingredients to the hot vinegar and allow the mixture to stand for three weeks. Then strain and bottle.

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Tomorrow: "Getting the Flower Garden Ready for Spring."